

VZCZCXRO4668
RR RUEHLMC
DE RUEHLM #0189/01 0340312
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 030312Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2503
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC
RHMCSUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAORC/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9235
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 8894
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5779
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 3813
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 1945
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 6333
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0993
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 COLOMBO 000189

SIPDIS

NEW DELHI FOR ICE ATTACHE

SIPDIS

E.O 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EWWT](#) [EAID](#) [ETRD](#) [PTER](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKA CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL WAR ON
TERRORISM AS CSI AND MEGAPORTS GO LIVE

11. SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 26, A WIDELY-PUBLICIZED OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE CONTAINER SECURITY INITIATIVE (CSI) AND THE MEGAPORTS INITIATIVE TOOK PLACE AT THE PORT OF COLOMBO, PRESIDED OVER BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE AMBASSADOR. CSI IS NOW FULLY OPERATIONAL, TARGETING AND SCREENING CARGO BOUND FOR THE US. MEGAPORTS IS ALSO OPERATIONAL, IN FINAL TESTING, SCREENING CARGO FOR SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIAL. IT IS PROJECTED TO BEGIN 24/7 OPERATIONS ON MARCH 1. THE PORT OF COLOMBO, THE LARGEST TRANS-SHIPMENT PORT IN SOUTH ASIA, IS NOW THE FIRST PORT IN ASIA AND SECOND PORT IN THE WORLD TO OPERATE BOTH CSI AND MEGAPORTS. END SUMMARY.

12. THE INAUGURATION OF THE US-BACKED CONTAINER SECURITY INITIATIVE (CSI) AND MEGAPORTS INITIATIVE TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE COLOMBO HARBOR FACILITIES ON JANUARY 26. ATTENDED BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SAMARAWEEERA (WHO ALSO SERVES AS MINISTER OF PORTS AND AVIATION), TREASURY SECRETARY PB JAYASUNDERA, CUSTOMS DIRECTOR GENERAL

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JAYATILLAKE, NUMEROUS DEPUTY MINISTERS AND SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHER GSL OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES, THE OPENING CEREMONY MADE CLEAR SRI LANKA'S PRIDE IN BEING THE FIRST PORT IN ASIA, AND THE SECOND PORT IN THE WORLD, TO HAVE BOTH CSI AND MEGAPORTS OPERATIONAL.

13. THE AMBASSADOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CSI ALLEN GINA AND ASSISTANT DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR MEGAPORTS DAVE HUIZENGA, REPRESENTED THE USG. IN THEIR REMARKS, THE CSI AND MEGAPORTS OFFICIALS SPOKE OF THE VALUE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE INITIATIVES, WHILE THE AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS FOCUSED ON THE COLOMBO PORT (WHICH PRIVATIZED A PORTION OF ITS OPERATIONS IN THE LATE 1990S) BEING AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF HOW COMPETITION IMPROVES THE PROFITABILITY, USEFULNESS, AND EMPLOYMENT LEVELS; AN EXAMPLE HE ENCOURAGED BE DUPLICATED IN OTHER SECTORS OF SRI LANKAN COMMERCE. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO CREDITED THE PROGRAMS FOR THEIR ROLES IN DETERRING TERRORIST ACTIVITY AND LAUDED SRI LANKA'S EFFORTS AS A PARTNER IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR.

14. THE CEREMONY GARNERED WIDE COVERAGE AND PROMINENT

FULL-COLOR PHOTOS IN THE PRINT MEDIA. ALL TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS BROADCAST FOOTAGE.

15. CSI IS DESIGNED TO EXTEND THE US ZONE OF SECURITY OUTWARD SO THAT AMERICAN BORDERS ARE THE "LAST LINE OF DEFENSE, NOT THE FIRST." THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY USING INTELLIGENCE AND AUTOMATED INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY AND TARGET CONTAINERS THAT POSE A RISK FOR TERRORISM, PRE-SCREENING THEM AT THE PORT OF DEPARTURE BEFORE THEY ARRIVE AT THE US PORT. THIS SYSTEM ADDITIONALLY ENABLES CONTAINERS TO PASS THROUGH CUSTOMS PROCEDURES ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN THE US.

16. THE MEGAPORTS INITIATIVE SCREENS CARGO FOR NUCLEAR AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS THAT COULD BE USED AGAINST THE US OR OTHER COUNTRIES. THROUGH THIS PROCESS, MEGAPORTS SERVES TO DETER POSSIBLE TERRORIST ACTS INVOLVING THE ILLICIT SHIPMENT OF NUCLEAR OR RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS TO OR THROUGH A PORT.

17. CSI IS NOW FULLY OPERATIONAL AND IS BEGINNING THE NSDD-38 PROCESS FOR DEPLOYING FULL-TIME DHS STAFF IN SRI LANKA. MEANWHILE, CSI WILL CONTINUE TO DEPLOY TDY STAFF FOR TERMS OF SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR. MEGAPORTS IS PARTIALLY OPERATIONAL AND CURRENTLY UNDERGOING FINAL TESTING. SRI LANKAN OFFICIALS ARE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN 24/7 OPERATIONS ON MEGAPORTS MARCH 1, FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF A NEW CUSTOMS OFFICE BUILDING AND STAFF COMPLEX AT THE PORT.

18. COMMENT: POST COMMENDS THE CSI AND MEGAPORTS TEAMS FOR THEIR EXCELLENT COLLABORATION AND DEDICATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE INITIATIVES IN SRI LANKA. BOTH TEAMS HAVE SHOWN TREMENDOUS FLEXIBILITY AND SENSITIVITY FOR GSL NEEDS AND CONCERNS THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. THIS ACHIEVEMENT ALSO REFLECTS MONTHS OF HARD WORK BY OUR

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ECONOMIC SECTION. IT IS AN INDICATION OF THE OVERALL CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AND, MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, A TANGIBLE SIGN OF OUR GROWING COOPERATION ON COUNTER-TERRORISM ISSUES.

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